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THOMAS BEKET,

OR

The Mitre and the Crown.

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THOMAS BEKET

or

The Mitre and the Crown.

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WORCESTER, MASS.:

1883.

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by

ALFRED WAITES.

IT may be well to state that when the latter portion of Scene VI., Act I. was printed it was with the idea that some incidents would be subsequently introduced which, upon reflection, were rejected; it being considered preferable to confine the story strictly within the limits of historical probability.

However unworthy these pages may be to assume the dignity of type, it would be ungrateful to neglect this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to Mr. Franklin P. Rice for the care he has exercised in printing them, as well as for the entire freedom from any anxiety with reference to "proof" which his conscientious supervision has afforded me.

A. W.

Worcester, Mass., Nov., 1883.

THE following pages constitute an endeavor to illustrate a great historical character, an attempt to interpret with sympathy and truth the workings of an intensely dramatic spirit.

That Mr. Froude should enforce precisely opposite conclusions is not to be wondered at, nor even regretted ; the earnest apologist for Henry the Eighth must needs find little to admire in the character of Becket.

Thomas of London, otherwise Thomas à Becket or Thomas Becket, possessed almost every worldly honor. He was the favorite of his king and the mentor of his prince ; the most brilliant swordsman of his time ; the bravest soldier ; the admired of all admirers ; the envied of the weak and foolish. He yielded to the earnest solicitation of Henry, and was made primate, when, as if by miracle, the whole current of his being changed, and to the unbounded astonishment and rage of the king, he became as devoted to the interests of the church as he had previously been to the service of the state ; descended from the heights of ambition and stood firmly in what he conceived to be the path of duty. He is the only one in the long line of Lord Chancellors who ever voluntarily resigned his power. When he did that, none knew better the difficulties that must beset him, how hate would usurp the throne of love and affection be replaced by cruelty. He faltered but once, when he consented to the Constitutions of Clarendon ; that was only the weakness of a

(vi.)

moment, he quickly withdrew the reluctant assent and resumed his solitary way. His every relative was banished, his every friend was exiled ; misfortune was heaped upon misfortune, and at each accession of misery he breasted trouble with a sterner courage ; deceived by those whom most he trusted and for whom he travailed, but supported by his convictions of duty and dying with the assurance of a martyr's crown.

From thinking of him the mind is irresistibly attracted to the consideration of that other great churchman, the favorite of another Henry, Chancellor too, who stultified himself in the vain endeavor to gratify a king's caprice and who breathed out his soul in a wail of despair.

THOMAS BEKET.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

HENRY II., King of England and Duke of Normandy.

THOMAS BEKET, Chancellor of England, afterwards
Primate.

THEOBALD, Primate of England.

RICHARD, Archbishop of York.

HENRY, Bishop of Winchester.

GILBERT FOLIOT, Bishop of London.

HILARY, Bishop of Chichester.

ROBERT, Bishop of Hereford.

JOCELYN, Bishop of Salisbury.

BARTHOLOMEW, Bishop of Exeter.

WALTER, Bishop of Rochester.

ROGER, Bishop of Worcester.

HUGO, Bishop of Durham.

ROBERT, Bishop of Lincoln.

FITZ STEPHEN,

EDWARD GRIM,

JOHN OF SALISBURY,

HERBERT DE BOSHAM,

} Friends and servants
of Beket.

JOHN OF OXFORD.

RENOUF DE BROU.

SIR RICHARD LUCY.

RICHARD BRITO.

WILLIAM TRACY.

REGINALD FITZ URSE.

HUGH MORVILLE.

CONIGSBY, De Broc's servant.

FOOL.

LABAN, a Jew.

HUMET, page in the court of Henry II.

MATILDA, mother of Henry II.

ELEANOR, wife of Henry II.

ETHEL, Daughter of Laban.

Courtiers, Monks, Exiles, Peasants, etc.

Time, A. D. 1157 - 1170.

THOMAS BEKET

OR

THE MITRE AND THE CROWN.


ACT I.

SCENE I. *A street in Westminster. Noise as of a procession passing. Shouts heard: "Long live the King's Chancellor."*

Beket's Fool. Ay, ay, cheer again. Now for my part, I cannot conceive why men should express pleasure like ill-mannered curs, by barking and capering round about one.

Here comes De Broc's man, Conigsby, a snuffling puppy, who will fawn in the day-time, when he can be seen; and bite at night when he cannot.

(sings) *William De Conigsby*⁽¹⁾
Came out of Brittany
With his wife Tiffany
And his maide Maufas
And his dogge Hardigras.



Enter CONIGSBY.

Conigsby. What mischief art brooding over now?

Fool. I am in a study of caninity.

Con. Fool!

Fool. Dost know what makes the fool?

Con. Why lack of sense.

Fool. But sense is relative. He that serves, serves an abler. Hark ye, I would rather be Beket's fool than some men's counsellor.

Con. Then thy master is a fool, he serves the King; and wears the sign of folly in the frippery he hangs about him.

Fool. He who ekes out poverty of mind by wealth of dress, lacks sense; and who lacks sense, thou sayest, is a fool: now Beket doth not lack sense; ergo, there are more fools than those that wear motley.

Con. Leave me, fool.

Fool. Leave me, corpse. I see the effigy upon thy tomb.

Con. By the Abbey of Glastonbury!⁽²⁾ What meanest thou?

Fool. Thy face is an effigy, and thy skull a tomb.

Con. Still in the dark. Thou carriest thy light in a dirty lanthorn.

Fool. Let me illuminate. Our wise men tell us that the

mind's the man. If that be true, his mind being gone, the skull is but a tomb for dead ideas. Thou hast heard tell of men with one foot i' the grave? those are they with half an understanding, with as little wit as wheelbarrows, and serve to trundle others' thoughts about the world.

Con. Truly, a wise fool.

Fool. Not so. A fool is not wise, and yet I am wise to be a fool. We are of the learned profession; sworn brothers to lawyers and physicians: for like lawyers we live by lying; and like physicians by giving people doses we should hate to take ourselves.

Con. Most learned lawyer, wilt secret for secret?

Fool. If it be a good one, I'll change it for thee.

Con. Wouldst earn some honest money? I can put thee in the way on't.

Fool. This is April. My purse hath been to let ever since last Christmas-tide.

Con. Good.

Fool. Nay, 'tis very bad.

Con. Beket had you whipped last week.

Fool. I think he did.

Con. The Bishops and the Barons are even now in council, impatient of the tyrannous insolence of the Saxon. They are eager to be rid of him, and are resolved to.

Fool. Brave resolution!

Con. He is the burden of my master's curses day and night. Now he would examine some of Becket's household, and pay 'em roundly too, if they'd inform him the secret of Becket's power o'er the King: witchcraft, by some 'tis thought; something even baser, others; and so think I, I know what are the duties of a royal favorite.

Fool. Take care, there's a monstrous spider at your ear.

Con. (excitedly) Is't gone? I hate spiders!

Fool. What a fuss about a fly catcher! Yet I have known a pretty creature look you, would scream with horror at the idea of a louse upon his bonnet, who yet with smuggest face would gladly hatch uncleaner thoughts beneath it. In an hour or two, when that wisdom hath discovered thy wits, seek out the fool and tell him how thou likest his philosophy.

[*Exit.*

Con. What can he mean? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Large room in the palace at Westminster; Henry seated.

Henry. Murmuring again, those pious prelates
And most obedient loyal vassals.
Their haughty spirits fret against the curb:
The pampered steed becomes refractory,
Which with hard discipline and scanty fare
Will inoffensive trot in sober harness.
We'll top their lofty pride whose strength was founded
On my predecessors' weaknesses:
Feeble authority shall be restored
To health, and outface tower'd insolence.
If determination can accomplish aught,
I will be truly monarch, and control
The church, as well as rule the state. Patience!
Patience! events are slow in ripening;
But the fruit must not be plucked too soon
Or bitterness doth reward the taster.
Barbarossa's council late at Pavia
Held Victor true successor of Saint Peter.
Alexander, at Agnani, boldly

Hath excommunicated Frederick,
And released his subjects from allegiance.
Had I a primate now subservient:
But Theobald, there is my stop; yet he
Is old and feeble, and must soon depart
The way of all good bishops; and then, then,
Beket shall sit in Canterbury's chair,
And I will dictate terms to humbled Rome.

Enter page with a letter in his hand.

Boy, come hither, what hast thou there? Hand it
To me. Was't given thee? Canst tell by whom?

Page. By none sire, I chanced upon it in the passage.

[Exit.

King. (reads) "To King Henry, servant of his servant."

Enter FITZSTEPHEN.

Malicious accusation! The devil
Had a hand in that though a priest penned it.

[Handing the letter.

Read Fitzstephen, it imports your master.

Fitz. This is a Tyrell's shot,⁽³⁾ aimed at the deer
Though meant to pierce a kinglier heart.

King. By the eyes of God thou sayest truly!

Go upon the instant, to our Chancellor;
The Prelates and the Barons are in counsel,
Bent on opposition to our sovereign will.
Bid him attend and stop their brawling:
He best can deal with soldier and with priest,
Who fears to encounter neither.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Large hall. THEOBALD, *Archbishop of Canterbury*;
RICHARD, *Archbishop of York*; GILBERT FOLIOT, *Bishop of London*; HENRY, *Bishop of Winchester*; *prelates, abbots and monks.*

Foliot, Bishop of London. By the advice of the Chancellor,
our King
Had scarce declarèd war against Toulouse,
When the Prelates and the Abbots are informed
That they must pay the charges. Hence the tax
Of shields is levied on us, and the Saxon,
The arrogant, insulting Beket, threatens
Those who hesitate, with the dire effects
Of Henry's anger. Say, shall we answer
This proud impertinency with humble
Condescension, and reverse the maxims
Of ecclesiasticism, which forbid us
To shed blood and anoint the palms of those
Who clutch the sword and live by slaughtering?
Or shall we call on Pope to answer King
And threaten England with an interdict?

Henry, Bishop of Winchester. When that my brother
was King of England,
Such an offence as this occasioned him
The bitterest repentance.

Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. Scarce can I
Believe that he whom I have nurtured
As mine own, should, with sacrilegious thoughts
Bind up the hands which can alone deal out
Redemption.

Foliot. Beket heeds the present, he
Recks not on the future; but see, he comes.

Enter BEKET.

Beket. Most rev'rend, learnèd fathers, I greet you
In the names of Peace and Charity.

Foliot. Peace
And Charity! when thou would'st seize the goods
Of holy church to aid you in your schemes
Of conquest! Nay, rather should you greet us
In the names of Hecate and Bellona.

Beket. Are you one of the Princes of Peace?
It is strange under what banners hatred
Can enlist recruits. The King doth not as
Beggars do, entreat your alms, but as befits
An honest man, claims payment of a debt.

You owe him something I presume?

Foliot. In common
With my brethren here, a debt of gratitude
For his care in the selection of friends
And chancellors.

Beket. Envy cheers a dauntless heart
Far more than plaudits buyable. By the
Sage advice of his friend and chancellor,
The King will enforce his warlike policy:
Therefore I pray you to comply at once
With his desires.

Theobald. In this we will not yield:
This is a thing ecclesiastical,
Removed from temporal rulers.

Beket. He who
Cannot, will not, pay the debt is bankrupt
In loyalty, and I, by the King's leave,
Threaten——

Theobald. Silence sir!

Beket. I'll not be silent
Until thou art true. You have sworn to be
Loyal subjects of our King; I demand
The pious fulfillment of that promise.
He who denies me is the King's enemy.

Theobald. Dar'st thou threaten us? Know that we in
turn

Can threaten, and can wield mightier bolts.
If thou pursuest aught 'gainst Holy Church,
Myself will excommunicate thee,
Banish thee from every sacred rite,
From present happiness and future hope.
Presumptuous man, puffed up with power,
Thou mount'st on royal favor to smite God
In the face. Down rebellious spirit
On your knees, and pray to be delivered
From the evils now impending over you.

*(The aged Archbishop staggers, Foliot and the Archbishop
of York step forward and support him.)*

It hath cost me much to say thus much to him.
Beket, Beket thou hast forced this from me.
I long have sorrowed and have prayed for thee;
I cherished thee with Jacob's love, and thou
Hast brought my gray hairs in sorrow to the grave.

*(Theobald falls into the arms of Foliot; Beket starts to aid
him, but the dying Archbishop motions him away.)*

SCENE IV.

Falaise. Room in the castle of the Duke of Normandy.
HENRY, MATILDA, ELEANOR.

Matilda. Is't true, I hear your messenger hath sailed
For England, with orders to the Bishops
Most peremptory, that they this Becket
Do elect, without delay, to the see
Of Canterbury, made vacant by the death
Of Theobald?

Henry. Nothing can be more true.

Matilda. And nothing was ever more unwisely done.
Henry, be advised by me; place not that
Power in the hands of your Chancellor;
You will rue it else.

Henry. Never. By his aid
Have I achieved success in every undertaking,
Have cropped the growing pride of the Norman
Barons; and compelled the haughty clergy
To walk with greater caution. He shall be
Primate; and I in matters spiritual
Will decide, as well as temporal.

Matilda. I distrust him wholly; why, I know not.
When evil's imminent, the danger's felt
Before it is revealèd.

Henry. Tell me now,
Should faithfulest servant unrewarded toil
Because of womanish suspicion?

Eleanor. Fear him not Henry, he is far too fond
Of gallantry and dainty cheer to assume
The pinchèd features of austerity.
Sensual men are seldom false to comfort;
Their appetites are sureties too valued
To be sacrificed upon the altar
Of imagined duty.

Matilda. I am suspicious,
I like him not, and must in your judgment
Suffer; for reason stands aloof and will
Not plead for me.

Eleanor. Now if his disposition
Were that of Louis, my late loving spouse,⁽⁴⁾
You might have cause to fear; for he's more fit
For a hermit's cave, with meagre diet
And penitential discipline, than to wear
A royal crown and be a nation's glory.

Matilda. I have my thoughts but will not utter them.

Henry. I pr'y thee tell me every doubt.

Matilda. To have
Them slighted? No.

Eleanor. Henry, our Empress Mother
Would rather break her heart with suffering
Than relieve it by a bold avowal
Of her suspicions.

Matilda. That is the burden
Of a love-song stolen from a troubadour.⁽⁵⁾
Is it not Eleanor?

Eleanor. (aside) Hush!

Henry. Your finger
On your lips madam? When wives and widows
Signal one another, husbands are in danger. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.

Beket's residence, Falaise, Normandy. Reading desk with manuscript copy of the New Testament upon it.

Beket. This morn, I saw some wretched Paterines,⁽⁶⁾
With branded front and lacerated shoulders:
Uncharitable winter, as they passed,
Whistled up fierce hunger's hounds, to track them
Till they perish. Religion with ungentle hands
Had closed the eyes of sweet compassion,
That hate alone might gaze on heretics.
They marchèd forth serenely confident,
As if God led them. I quailed beneath the glance
Of one of these whose look did question me:—
“Wouldst thou thus much for righteousness?”
Truth sprang to my lips and answered “no.”
Pale resolution fled my countenance,
And traitor shame did hoist his ensign there.
Though these men sinn'd and justly were condemned;
Yet I was never humbled so before.
What was't that humbled me? What was't made them
Insensible to pain? Nay, welcome

Suffering with smiles as 't were a blessing?
Hell had no share in that. Sometimes I think
The world's hatred secureth heaven's love,
And earth's despised are God's nobility.

Enter HUMET.

What news Humet?

Humet. The King doth hither come
And bade me say, within the hour he wished
To speak with you.

Enter HENRY and Sir RICHARD LUCY.

Henry. And near outstripped a tardy
Messenger: we were in haste Beket;
For jocund hearts and lazy heels go ill
Together. The long wished for day hath come,
And I do now with heartiest will, greet thee
As England's Primate.

Beket. As England's Primate?
Heard I aright?

Henry. You did. My trusty friend
Sir Richard Lucy, here shall tell the story.

Lucy. When the late Archbishop died, 't was I
That hither brought the news. I then received
The King's commands, and signified 's pleasure

To the Bishops, that his Chancellor
Should fill the vacant chair of Canterbury.
At the words, as if by magic changed,
Each face put on grim consternation's mask,
And hesitation, like an evil spirit,
Gripp'd their tongues, lest they should acquiescence
Yield to duty. 'Twas Babel come again:
I something heard, but nothing understood.
Thus time went on, no progress made; I called
Again and ventured to expostulate:
They, bolder grown, found speech to urge objections;
One exclaimed in tones of menace:—"Dare we
Insult heaven and desecrate the chair
Of Augustine, by placing a hunter
Therein, learned in sport but ignorant
Of scripture; and by making a worldling
And a lover of war, the almoner
Of heaven and the minister of peace?"

Beket Foliot said that.

Lucy. 'Twas he, Gilbert Foliot.
Still another said:—"This courtly hireling
Will overthrow the Church as he did erst
The gallant Frenchman; ⁽⁷⁾ will put his foot upon 't
And cry, 'surrender to my King.'"

Henry. And that

Was Jocelyn of Salisbury.

Lucy. Some days
Ago, I bore the final order thence,
Somewhat impatiently perchance, did tell
These reverend fathers that their fooling
Had incensed the King; I gave them time enough,
An hour. Reminded them what they'd forgot,
So rapt in pious duties, that the King
Had weakly condescended to request
What he did now demand; and't should go hard
With them if they did not compliance make
Within the limit specified. At this
My exorcism, all hesitation vanished.
I scanned the list, but one dissentient.

Beket. That was Gilbert Foliot

Lucy. Who sneering said:—
“The King hath worked a miracle this day,
Hath turned a layman into an archbishop;
And a soldier into a saint.”

Henry The first
Fair wind, thou must, for consecration there,
To England. Return as quickly as thou canst;
We must confer anent the papacy.
My Lord Archbishop of Canterbury,
You shall be even with the Bishops yet.

The throne is empty when its rule 's unprized,
The king 's uncrowned whose wishes are despised.

[*Exeunt Henry, Lucy and Humet.*

Beket. "A layman turned into an archbishop,
A soldier into a saint." If that should
Prove true now.

Enter JOHN OF SALISBURY.

What, John Petit, you are thrice welcome here.
Your Polycraticus⁽⁸⁾ hath much to answer for.

John. Hath my poor book caused you to look with favor
Upon the succession to our master
Theobald?

Beket. Nay rather hath occasioned
The only doubt I entertain about
The matter.

John. Doubt?

Beket. Yes. Doubt of my power
To withstand temptation, doubt of myself.
The King; I would not be thought ungrateful.

John. Can there be ingratitude in doing right?

Beket. But the conflict that must come; I have laughed
In the very face of death, yet am frightened
By a thin imagination. If 'twere distant,

I could nerve my will to work my purpose.
It is the now that scares us; small things seen near
Are large, o'ermastering feeble sense.
A gnat in flying close before our vision
Assumes an eagle's bulk; thus in the mind's eye
The little present often fills the field
And shuts out larger duties.

John. Miserable,
Purblind mortals that we are, to salute
The servant at the gate, and turn our backs
Upon the glory of the coming master.

Beket. What meanest thou my son?

John. That the present 's
But the hireling of the future: eternity
Is lord of time.

Beket. That 's true.

John. Then think of that,
The rest is easy, resolution 's all;
With that for a support we may attain
To loftiest deeds.

Beket. Yet 't is very difficult,
Abelard, your one time master,⁽⁹⁾ found it so.
It is easy to dash into the midst
Of strife, to fight nobly in the excitement
Of the battle, and after a brief hour,

Return crowned with victory; but to gaze
Adown the vale of years, to choose your path
And follow it; to conquer wild desire,
Disdain the smiles of siren fortune;
At every step the way more sombre;
And, as you near the end, to see the hopes
That had till now sustained you, fade away
Into the mists of time. The task is not
An easy one, good John of Salisbury.

John. If it were, 't would not be worth the doing.
The value of the conquest is balanced
By its difficulty, To crush a worm
Is not a victory; to kill a dragon
May be counted one. He who would achieve
Great deeds, must have a hermit's patience
And a martyr's courage.

Beket. Polycraticus,
Again you are in the right. Said I not
Wisely, your book hath much to answer for?

John. I have forborne congratulation——

Beket. You
Are right. The wise man with indifferent eye
Regards all human honors. The ignorant
Thinks his merit wronged by others' recompense.
He who hath aught to give, is praised most

By those who hope to gain it. Flattery
Links arms with death; Agrippa, in his proudest
Moment, beheld them thus, and with a sigh,
Fled from this lying world.⁽¹⁰⁾ My faithful friend,
Go to the abbey yonder; leave me to thought;
And while you 're absent, let your fervent prayers
Be intercessors for me; the envied
Most have need of them.

[*Exit John.*]

What can he do
Who would reconcile the irreconcilable,
Be Primate, faithful to his obligations,
Yet bate no jot of friendship for the King?
Thus hedged around by sad perplexities,
Whichever way I turn the thorns point at me.
I have known men when earthly counsel failed,
Haphazard turn the pages of the Holy Book
And read the passage where the index rested.⁽¹¹⁾
That now, I'll venture on, and if it speak
To me in language clear and unmistakable,
I'll hold it as the voice of the Divine,
And heed the sacred mandate.

(*Seats himself and reads.*)

"No man can serve two masters: for either
He will hate the one, and love the other; or he
Will hold to the one, and despise the other.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore
I say unto you, take no thought for your life,
What ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet
For your body what ye shall put on."

(Beket closes the book and rises from his seat much agitated.)

If ever the Holy Book directed
Erring mortal's steps, mine should not wander now.
What a flood of light illumines my path!
The gloom and darkness gone for ever.
Self love doth blind us, oh! what fools are we,
Hoodwink ourselves, and say we cannot see. [Exit.

SCENE VI.

A street in Westminster. Enter FITZ URSE and Sir RICHARD LUCY.

Fitz Urse. So the King hath made him Primate.

Lucy. Ay, wherefore let us rejoice; 't will afford him greater means to entertain his friends withal; but in that before, he was no sluggard, no Norman ever behaved so bountifully.

Fitz U. Ha, ha! Rare sport 't will be to hunt and wanton with an archbishop.

Lucy. He 'll make a royal primate.

Fitz U. He is not yet a priest.

Lucy. But to-morrow will be one; to-morrow priest, next day archbishop.

Fitz U. He will be consecrated at Canterbury you say?

Lucy. At the hands of my Lord of Winchester at Canterbury.

Fitz U. Let us hasten thither.

Lucy. Can we be there in time to witness the pompous ceremony?

Fitz U. We shall be late for prayers but in time for dinner. Ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

Enter TRACY *and* BRITO.

Tracy. But he refuseth. I heard him tell the King that he could not accept the boon; pointed to his plumed cap, his costly dress, and bade him say if those were the marks by which one should know an archbishop.

Brito. Ay, and told the King he rejected the gift to preserve the friendship.

Tracy. Here comes one can tell us more.

Enter FITZ STEPHEN.

How likes the King Beket's refusal?

Fitz Stephen. Refusal? The King hath overborne his scruples. Gilbert of London alone opposed the election, and in his spleen declared that the King had worked a miracle; had turned a layman into an archbishop, a soldier into a saint.

Omnes. A layman into an archbishop, a soldier into a saint. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FOOL and LABAN.

Fool. Why Laban, thou seem'st in pain, hast coined⁽¹²⁾ a tooth to-day? If thou wert not a Hebrew, Appolonia⁽¹³⁾ now would help thee; but Christian Saints are deaf to Jewish prayers.

Laban. Good master, there's a maiden in the court, a little girl, fifteen years ago, that was in Stephen's time, they took her from me; then she was two years old, yet she loved me. They forced her to be baptized, may be now she hath forgotten her poor father. Because I tried to get her back, I can trust you, they banished me, and on pain of death forbade my entrance here to look upon my child. Thus do the Christians inculcate the teaching of our Rabbi Hillel which they do term "The Golden Rule."

Fool. There is a maid who hath a Jewish face and is attendant on the sister of our new Archbishop.

Laban. Her name's Rebecca?

Fool. By my faith, 'tis not. They call her Ethel.

Laban. Rebecca is a sweeter name; it was Her mother's: sacred are the memories
That cling around it, whose tendrils will not
Loose their grip till the appointed, blessed
Time. Good master, hast ever marked her eyes?
The soul of an angel looked upon me

Through them; they would bend on me so trustingly,
I have felt ashamed that I was human.
She hath walked with me upon the margin
Of a precipice, and seen no danger
In its awful depth because her hand held mine.
Laughter slumbered in the dimples of her cheek,
Sometimes I bade it wake that I might watch
The neighbor features join in the merry riot.—

Fool. Here she comes on her way to mass; see if she be
your lost Rebecca.

Enter ETHEL.

Ethel. A fool and a Jew! Rare company! (*To the Jew.*)
Why do you stare at me so rudely? Out of my way, let me
pass you dirty Jew! [*Exit.*]

Laban. God of my fathers, 'tis my daughter! [*Exit.*]

Fool. There's a rare touch of human nature. How many
of us do despise the things that we would reverence under
other names.

Now that old fool should, like the owl, be dimly seen by
night; the neighborhood is something dangerous for an Is-
raelite. There! they begin to sport with him. There goes
a stone at him. A moving argument. He turns this way;
he gave me six pennies once, I'll hazard something to pro-
tect him.

(*Enter Jew and peasants beating him.*)

Hold! Hold! What's the trouble now? I here do constitute myself judge of this court. Greater fools have tried weightier causes. Speak, slave! what is thy grievance?

Peasant. This Jew is one of those that stole a Christian child, and, in horrid mockery of our faith, did crucify it on last holy Friday.

Fool. This cannot be true.

Peasant. I'll take my bread and salt on't.

Fool. Laban, what hast thou to say to this?

Laban. 'T is a lie as false as human pity
When it bids us live to suffer. Every
Evil passion is let loose to bait us;
Ours, a weight of misery to none other
Comparable; heirs to a thousand years
Of Christian hate, but not unmanned, we still
Defy the great conspiracy of heaven
And hell. What is't you weaklings honor?
Courage? Will indomitable? Faith unwavering?
Were ye not dead to every sense of wrong,
If every spark of manliness were not
Extinguished, you'd bow before us as
A nobler race, and proudly boast a kinship.
Alas! The measure of our trial is

Yet unfilled, and for a time you still must be
The Devil's instruments, for which he
Hath ta'en away your hearts, and in their place
Put hatred to the Jew.

Fool. I declare the Jew discharged. Now oppressed oppressors, leave my court. *[Exeunt peasants.]*

Come Father Laban, I'll hide thee in the stables, and at night-fall thou hadst best be gone. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Westminster. Room in Beket's house. Enter*
JOHN OF SALISBURY *and* HERBERT DEBOSHAM.

Herbert. I know not what to think on 't, but fear me
Evil times are about to fall upon the Church.

John. He is bound to the King by every tie
And will surely second all his wishes.

Herbert. Yet 't was no desire of his to be Archbishop,

Enter BEKET in a monk's dress, listening.

He long refused and only yielded
When 't was plainly seen that to run counter
To the King would cost him every pleasure
That makes life worth the living; royal favor,
Wealth and popular applause.

Beket. (coming forward) You wrong me!

Herbert.

this apparition?

What means

John. A trick imagination plays upon us?

Beket. Is sincerity so rare a visitor
Your eyes behold it with astonishment?

John. No, but to think that he who late was girt
About with all magnificence, should now put on
A monkish garb as if he had renounced the world.

Beket. You would judge my goodness by my
Costume, that's not wisdom; men are like books,
The noblest matter's often found beneath
A worthless dress, and costly coverings
Disappoint, when we discern the weaknesses
They hide. This garb becomes me, I indeed
Rank first in subject dignity, and yet
The poorest beggar in this realm is richer
In God's grace. You were counting up the cost
Of opposition to the King; think'st thou
Those were the sweets that made my share of life
More palatable? Royal favor means
Injustice, and where that is, royalty
Is crime.⁽¹⁾ He builds on clouds who trusts thereon.
Wealth? Should man in his little breathing time,
Exhaust himself by eager striving
In the mad race for wealth, when at the goal
The victor's stripped of every penny
And Cræsus stands a pauper in the sight of Heaven!

Popular applause? That is the drunkards'
Offering to baseness; to sober minds
As fetid as the breath that makes it:
That prize can only be contended for
By liars; its absence argues virtue.
Mark me! Where every man is faithful
None will be popular.

John and Herbert. Count us as faithful.

Beket. Then I'll make trial of your fidelity.
This casket holds the royal seal; go both
To Henry, tell him henceforth I'll not be
Chancellor, give this to him as earnest
Of my wish to accomplish benefits
He dreams not of.

John. This is a day of great
Surprises!

Herbert. And deeds incomprehensible!

Beket. Speak plainly, without seeking subterfuge.
I hold him dearer who's manfully i' the wrong
Than him who plays at see-saw with the truth
And wavers with the tilting.

John. The King's love
Made you Chancellor, and gratitude Archbishop.

Beket. You reprimand me. What an ingrate I!

But ere that name be mine, resolve me this:—
If the King wished you to risk salvation
That he might do injustice, would you be
His friend or enemy if you refused
To yield obedience? You do not answer.
Then do my bidding. Why do you linger?

John. He is nor wise nor true whose feet are swift
To carry evil tidings.

Beket. We know not
Good nor evil; that which doth seem a curse to-day
May prove to-morrow's blessing.

John. The King hath
Still in mind the counsel I gave Theobald.

Herbert. Let us return the seal into your hands.

John. I implore you consider the fatal
Consequences of the step you're taking.

Beket. Heaven's delegate is faithless
When he thinks of consequences. Go!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Street in Falaise. Enter RICHARD, Archbishop of York; GILBERT FOLIOT, Bishop of London; HILARY, Bishop of Chester; and JOHN OF OXFORD.

John. There's treachery in the camp, my lords; the King Hath fallen out with Becket.

Foliot. I knew it
Would be so.

John. He hath resigned the chancellorship
At which the King is greatly angered.

Foliot. I knew it would be so.

John. I hold Becket
In extremest dislike.

Foliot. Hate, I would say,
But that the term's unclerical.

Richard and Hilary. We love
Him not.

John. Now is our opportunity.

When the sun is up and shining brightly,
We cannot hope to outface it, but when
'Tis dimmed by clouds then we can venture on 't,
Point out its figure and the spots that blemish it.

Hilary. What means this prologue pray?

John.

Nothing but

this;

The King hath given me orders to proceed
At once unto the papal court at Sens,
To apply the proper antidote to those
Poisoned by the venom which our Archbishop
Pukes in the spasms of piety that afflict him.
Your substantial wishes would be welcomed.

Richard. We applaud the King's selection, to aid
The furthering of your worthy enterprise,
That we can give, you may command.

John.

I thank

You, and with due gratitude. The King's is
Your cause and mine; we erelong by some means
Or other, shall catch him tripping.

Foliot.

Some means

Or other! That means honestly I trust.

John.

Any instrument with which you disarm
An enemy, is used honestly.

Foliot. My
Wishes would gladly bear yours company
Did not conscience whisper nay.

John. (aside to *Foliot.*) Tut! Tut, my lord!
Conscience is a thing of our own begetting,
And we may humor 't till like a spoiled child
'Twill cry for the impossible.

Foliot. I will
Consult a while with my brethren and give
You further audience.

[*Exeunt Richard, Hilary and Foliot.*]

John. Then I may count
On him. Because he is balked in one thing,
Everything that Beket does is looked upon
Unkindly by the King. Foliot thought
That he should have the primacy, and loathes
The present occupant. Richard of York,
Henry of Winchester, and Hilary
Of Chichester, all think their godliness
Was overlooked, and, by their jealousy,
Display its worth. These all do beg of me
To help them hate. If some men are foolish,
And, like children, will buy what harms 'em,
Are obstinately bent on its possession,

Why should I refuse to sell for a large price
A commodity that costs me nothing?
I'll trade upon their foibles while it pays me;
Human prepossessions make the richest market
For the enterprising.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Room in the castle at Southampton. The KING and BEKET.

King. I have received thy message and the seal;
What meanest thou my lord?

Beket. To consecrate
To heaven the little earthly life remains.

King. I'll aid thee in that praiseworthy effort.
Thou art Archbishop and Archdeacon both
Of Canterbury. Resign the latter
Office. The great mass of filthy lucre
That doth attach to't, weigheth on thy mind.
I will remove the burden of that care
That thou perchance may'st smile again, and we
In thine perceive a friendly countenance.

Beket. I shall yield if you demand it; but must make
Claims upon you which will atone for this.
The town of Rochester, the castles both
Of Rochester and Tunbridge are of my see:

These, and such as these, of which there's a list
Of no mean length, must, if right is to be done,
From the greedy maw of Clare and others
Be speedily disgorged.

King. We'll think awhile
On that; right shall be done thou may'st depend on't.
Beket, I am reluct to think that thou
In very truth hast now deserted me;
My memory of the past is never dulled
By antics of capricious, new found fancies.
Thou once didst aid me with all the energy
Of thy bold mind; yea, didst improve upon
The methods I would practise. I have been
No niggard in dealing out thy praises.
Thou know'st my dearest thought was by thy help
To reach the pinnacle of fame. Didst thou
Raise hopes thus high, out of mere wantonness
To dash them down again?

Beket. When we looked
On the landscape side by side, dost wonder
That our minds alike were movèd by the view?
But turn we back to back; the distant peaks
That seem to you aflame with rosy light,
To me are all invisible.

King. Too late
Wilt thou regret that thou hast turned thy back
On friendship.

Beket. When friendship's incompatible
With duty there is no alternative,
If honesty means what it should. There is
The pole-star; not there.

King. I understand thee:
What thou refus'st to do, shall yet be done
If not so quickly. He who maketh tools
Doth not depend upon a single instrument.
I who made thee Primate, to do my work
Can dispense with thee whate'er thou think'st on't.
The church was planted by divinity,
And groweth heavenward, as beseems it:
That it may spread abroad the useful branches,
It must be clipped at the top. Dost mark me
My Lord of Canterbury? That I'll do,
And speedily. Benefit of clergy,
By which justice hath so long been cheated,
Shall cease to work iniquity. A priest
In Worcestershire, debauched a girl; her father
Made complaint; the priest hath murdered him.
What punishment shall here be meted out?

Beket. The priest hath already from his office
Been degraded, and shall in strict confinement
With his grief, weep out life's lagging days.

King. He should have short shrift and a high gallows.

Beket. That which hath once been dedicate to heaven,
Can for no earthly crime, be confiscate:
They only who are deputies of God
Can safely punish him. That hath been done;
And the black spot that stained his life, is now
In sorrow steeped and purified by tears.

King. This is an idle plea for priestly power.

Beket. The scales of justice are so finely poised
A hair will turn the beam. When men throw spite
Into the balance, God terms it vengeance,
So records it. You have played with the world
As a thoughtless boy who tortures helplessness
And smiles on agony, because he knows it not.
When a starved peasant within your forest
Kills a fawn, as much his as yours,
To feed his children, is't for justice' sake
That both his hands and feet are smitten off
And his eyes put out; and that was once a man
Made hideous deformity? Thy father
Geoffrey, because some priests thought it unmeet

To approve his choice did mutilate them all.⁽²⁾
That is the justice of Plantagenet!

King. Insolent priest!

Beket. Unwelcome truth is always
Insolent.

King. I'll hold no further parley, the Prelates
And the Barons are by my order now
Convoked, hard by at Clarendon, and there
The evils that are daily perpetrated
I' the name of holy church, shall be examined
And determined. Meet us there to-morrow.
Be ready to comply with our demands,
Reflect on what thou wert, thou art, and may'st be.

Beket. I will.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The cathedral cloisters, Winchester. Enter BEKET and JOHN OF SALISBURY.

John. Wherefore these self accusings? What you did
Was wisely done. When tempests overtake
The messenger, he is not blamed who waits
For fairer weather.

Beket. But if his message
Be important, its import may be lost
The while he lingers.

John. Still it is wise to pause.
Should he attempt to cross the ford that's swollen
By storms, he and the message may be lost
Together. The Legate advised you to't.

Beket. He did, you will bear me witness that he did.

John. You promised to observe the Constitutions.

Beket. Alas!

John. And thus obtained advantages.

When times are boisterous he who 'd hit the mark
Must not think of aiming at it.

Beket. No power
Can turn the arrow that's barbed with perfect truth.

John. We are simply human, perfection's not
Our attribute; he who seeks that doth give
Offence to heaven and blinded by its brightness
Cannot know the earthly good he treads upon.
Virtue must be restrained as well as vice;
For give it scope and 't will become a crime.
Let us think upon our faults, endeavor
To correct them, remembering they are kin
Of ours and partners in mortality.

Beket. Your argument is subtle, but I like it not;
Our scholars now do prate so learnedly,
They make assassination seem a virtue.⁽³⁾
When we deceive others, we fool ourselves most.
Within our special court for every sin
A hundred pleaders rise to silence conscience
By extenuation; we list to them
And leave the tribunal satisfied, when we
Should be repentant. Thus wrong doth run its course,
Till at the last, mere mention of temptation
Is excuse enough, the jingle of the money

Exculpates the thief. This is the doctrine
Of our wisest casuists; beware on't,
For to my shocked mind, if we acquire faults thereby
Our learning works more harm than ignorance doth.

John. For fear some error may be mixed therewith,
Shall no man seek for wisdom?

Beket. True wisdom
Is immaculate, and unattainable
By him who crawls through dirt to find it.
Were men as honest with their consciences
As with that envious faculty which they
Term curiosity, this world might be
Reparadised, and we not fear expulsion.

Enter GRIM, hastily.

Grim. Boundless compliance, boundless compliance
Wins the love of princes.

Beket. Wherefore this anger?

Grim. (to John) You were the counsellor!

Beket. What
mean you Grim?

Grim. Have you consented to the Constitutions
The King did promulgate at Clarendon?

Beket. I have, my son.

Grim. Better have leagued with hell!
He's but a fool who quarrels with a king
And shrinks afeard when majesty doth threaten.
Heaven must have blushed for such a champion.
Who shall head the faithful when their captain
Has deceived them? Who shall protect the flock
When their shepherd has deserted them?

Beket. I have done wrong, very wrong, and do repent me.
Thou art a truer monitor, and hast
Awaked the sleeper. Have mercy heaven
Upon my weakness, nerve me with strength that I
May falter nevermore. [*Exeunt Beket and Grim.*]

John. My advice, he said, was casuistry,
And that he scorned. Well, he shall shortly know
What obstacles his honesty must halt at.

Re-enter Grim.

If the Archbishop repent, 't will work more harm
Than if he had been steady in his course.

Grim. If? He hath. The messenger even now
Is hastening on his way to tell the King.

John. This grieveth me. The skilful pilot tacks
To make the haven, and though retreating
Hath the port in view.

Grim. He who hath aught to lose
Is bribed : self and false judgment are twins.

John. The little I've acquired I fain would keep.
Is that a sin ? If he retract, farewell
All goods of mine.

Grim. When right and might
Encounter, all terrene things are worthless
Till that contest's ended.

John. Yet he who owns
A precious gem will scarcely throw't away.

Grim. Our dearest jewel, a spirit uncorrupted,
Would then be well bestowed in heaven's treasury.

John. Who cometh here in cogitative mood ?

Grim. A wolf in sheep's clothing. Let us withdraw.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter FOLIOT.

Foliot. Why cannot men be honest and straightforward ?
Here's Beket now agrees to ratify
The action of the King, surrendereth
All his wonted pride and smileth on defeat.
I could have honored him had he resisted
Boldly ; but to double like a timid hare
That feels the teeth of hounds before they catch him.

He who for such a man preserves respect
Can merit none himself. Plantagenet

Enter KING and JOHN OF OXFORD.

And John of Oxford in earnest conversation:
I'd like to know what 'tis they talk about.
Sire, I was not present at your court to-day.

King. Thou wert not missed; but why wert thou not
there?

Foliot. The probability of meeting Beket——

King. Must that name ever ring within mine ears?
Thou had'st best be careful how thou mock'st me.

Foliot. Sire!

King. Beket hath retracted his consent.
All's at an end between that man and me.

Foliot. The villain!

King. The dirty mob doth cheer the act,
And beggar monks do laud his sanctity.

John. Mere idle noise. He who doth fly at power,
Gets all his inspiration from the powerless;
And sanctity is cheap where impudence
Is thus mistaken for it.

Foliot. Sire, I wish
To make amends for seeming inattention.
I am not lacking in true loyalty.

King. Then come advise with me; John of Oxford
We shall see you presently. [*Exeunt King and Foliot.*

John. 'Tis very strange
How meanings change as we do grow in years.
This same obstinacy, for which a child
Would be well whipped, is titled perseverance
In a man. He's doubtless wise who knoweth
His own father, but wiser far is he who
Can clearly trace the lineage of his thoughts.
Who would think now that so foul a mother
Could give birth to so fair a progeny?
Yet 'tis my belief, that at least one half
Of all the virtues with which we credit
Our poor humanity, are begotten
By ill humor. 'Tis surely so with Beket.
Did time permit, I'd so display this precept
As to hinge upon't a new philosophy;
And teach the world the comfortable doctrine
That every evil worketh good.

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Westminster. Hall of William Rufus. Enter KING with courtiers, among them JOHN OF OXFORD.

King. Now John of Oxford, what news hast thou
From Sens? Hath his Holiness disposed his mind
To take part in my quarrel?

John. He bade me
Tender you assurance of his sympathy,
Regret for your annoyance, and promised
Shortly to deliver you effectually
From your arch enemy.

King. A curse upon
Such promises! I've had enough of them;
They are like bubbles children blow in air,
Appear as glittering jewels to the eye;
Attempt to grasp them, and the hand doth close
Upon a spot of dirtiness.

John. Here is
A letter which was written by Beket

To the Pope; I obtained it, no matter how.
Will 't please you read it?

King. (reads) "The King's a tyrant
Full of malice." Well 'tis but natural
He should describe me thus; would 'twere the worst
That he could do.

John. You know 'tis Beket's hand?

King. 'Tis his and could be sworn to 'mong a thousand.
Hast thou no other?

John. None. May I retain it?

King. 'Tis thine to do with it as pleaseth thee.
Since thou did'st visit Reginald, Archbishop
Of Cologne, I have received some overtures
From Barbarossa, 'tis but to give him
My support, and Victor now enthroned
In Rome, will excommunicate my foe;
Alexander then 'll be deposed, to wander
With his friend throughout the world and ruminate
Upon the memory of unrequited
Friendship.

John. (aside) He doth proceed too hastily.
Sire, pardon me, you must not think on that:
It would be a sin for whose committal
The pride of twenty Bekets would not compensate.

Though blinded he's no Samson, and though he twine
His arms around the pillars of our church,
He cannot move them, his bones will vainly crack
In the endeavor, while we securely
Look upon his rage and calmly plot his ruin.
Should you think fit 'twere well to rest awhile
On Frederick's promise.

Enter FOLIOT.

Foliot. Sire! sire! The Primate
As you know hath often fouled my good intent,
Though I have been no enemy of his.
But now 'tis changed, for I have learned such things
That do release me from all bonds of duty.

King. Proceed, we'll yield attentive audience.

Foliot. Our holy Archbishop of Canterbury
Hath made a compact with the brood of hell,
And, in contempt of you, doth celebrate
The sacred mass under the invocation
Of the Evil Spirit. I have no lack
Of witnesses and myself will testify
To the truth of that I here have uttered.

John. I'm glad of this, it hath relieved my heart
And banished every scruple.

King. Foliot,
John of Oxford, see that this crowning proof
Of Beket's wickedness be known by all,
That the realm may see how we're endangered
And who doth aid the enemy we combat.

John. But sire, to ground your cause immovably,
I earnestly entreat that you do hale him
To your court, demanding that he purge away
The insult he did throw upon't, when he
Refused a personal appearance there.
Compelled to answer, suddenly adjudge
The instant payment of a sum he squandered
When your Chancellor, that will touch his pride
And swift rejection follow; let your claim
Be moderate, trifling; thus shall your temperance
Be apparent and all recrimination
Lose its force.

Foliot. If he yield and pay the sum?

King. He'll not yield, 'tis not in Beket's temper.

John. For fear of accidents, you'll make some friend
The judge, who will proceed in equity.

King. That shall be John of Oxford.

John. Then justice
Shall be done indeed. My heart exulteth

In the thought of his humiliation.
If he yield he acknowledgeth the wrong
And fortifieth further claims upon him.
For which my gentle lord you'd best prepare
By careful noting every circumstance
Of this most hateful compact with the Devil.
Be sure to stimulate your witnesses,
That they be nothing loth to evidence,
Give earnest promise of the King's protection.
Let naught diminished be to prove his guilt,
This shall o'erthrow him if all else fail.
Exaggerate particulars if you will
To scare the multitude; a little wrong
Is sanctified when it repels a greater.

[*Exit Foliot.*

Here comes the Archbishop. Foliot smelt him.

Enter BEKET.

Beket. Sire, I crave a moment's conference with you.

(The King does not answer, but gazing contemptuously on Beket slowly withdraws, courtiers following.)

John. My lord, I do regret the difference grows
Between the King and you.

Beket. Were all regrets
As hearty, sorrow would be known by smiles.
The difference is healable; could kings
Be penitent, then popes might be physicians.

John. To place dependence on the papal court
Resembles leaning on a broken reed.
Henry hath been informed of every fact,
E'en the letters penned by you to Alexander
Have been by me returnèd to our King
That he might know what sort of man defies him.

Beket. The Pope trust thee with letters writ by me!
Nay, rather would he trust thy friend, that vile
Schismatic of Cologne. 'Tis false, slave!

John Slave?

Beket. Who is so vile a slave as he whose mind
Is heavy bound in chains of prejudice,
So narrowly contract he cannot breathe
A wholesome thought? Why should such soulless knaves
Be suffered to perplex the world, to cry
Halt to truth, and with base impediments
To block the way of common honesty!

John. Your elocution's better than your reason.
Yet in spite of all the correspondence,
My King's and mine, with him you're pleased to term

Schismatic of Cologne, his Holiness
Dares not affront us, therefore these letters.

(Hands a letter to Beket.)

Behold! Is it not well writ? Note specially
That part in which you say "the King's
A tyrant full of malice." Can you deny
The hand? We've had so many such of late
That I'll leave this one with you, digest it
If you can.

[Exit John.]

Beket. I suspected foes at Sens.
The King's all powerful there, and lately said,
That in the small circumference of his purse
He held the Pope and all his Cardinals.
This doth confirm that. I am abandoned.
Alexander, God's vicegerent upon earth,
Were you placed in that exalted office
To be a pander to the basest passions?
Were the world crammed with argument, no reason
Could be given why you should juggle us.
When God coined man, he with his image stamped
The quality, that at their true value
Through the world they might pass unsuspected.
But hell in part reversed heaven's intent:

And the great counterfeiter hath given
Currency to beings made up of base alloy,
Uncertain in the ring, and lacking weight.
These brazen counters take the place of gold
And frown upon the worthier metal;
But at the grand assay, the spurious from
The true divided, these cozening pieces
Shall be flung aside with dross and all impurity.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Room in the Castle at Northampton. The KING, FOLIOT and DE BROC.*

King. Now is our Hercules without his club.
The Pope at length hath sent me surest warrant
That he's no favorer of rebellion.

Foliot. In the matter of the legacy?⁽¹⁾

King. Ay,
In that. De Broc go quickly with your horsemen,
Take up your quarters in the Canon's house
Where Beket's lodged.

De Broc. If he refuse to budge?

King. Then force him out!

De Broc. With all despatch I'll do
Your bidding. [*Exit De Broc.*]

Foliot. Sire, the Archbishop hath called
His suffragans together to furnish him
With prayerful counsel.

King. Take note of aught
Resembling disaffection, and as you
Value my regard inform me who are
Friends and enemies.

Foliot.

I will do so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A street in Northampton. Enter BEKET, FITZ STEPHEN and GRIM.

Beket. Nay, but to be thrust forth into the street
Denied a shelter in the Canon's house !

Grim. This is the King's malignant act, I trow.
An insult stains the soul of him who flings it,
Whether it reach the mark or not's indifferent.

Fitz Stephen. And injuries meekly borne, shine like a
glory
Round the sufferer's head, grow brighter
With the fleeting years, till at the judgment
They'll vie with heavenly radiance, when human eyes
Shall be unscaled to see the virtues that redeemed
Our race from base extinction.

Beket. Thou art my
Friends indeed.

Grim. Whither go you now, my lord?

Beket. To Henry of Winchester, he, of the Bishops,
Is best inclined toward me.

Fitz Stephen. (aside) Not for any love
He bears you, but because it gives annoyance
To his royal cousin.

Beket. Thence to the conclave
And my trial.

Grim. Remember Clarendon ! *[Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Room in the Castle at Northampton. Conclave of the Bishops. BEKET; HENRY, *Bishop of Winchester*; FOLIOT; HILARY, *Bishop of Chichester*; ROBERT, *Bishop of Lincoln*; BARTHOLOMEW, *Bishop of Exeter*; ROGER, *Bishop of Worcester*, etc., etc.

Beket. Now more than ever is it apparent
That if we had consented to degrade
The spiritual, and exalt the temporal,
There would have been no quarrel; our refusal
Is the motive for this persecution.
Hence I am charged with treason to the King,
And friendship's gifts are now declarèd debts
To swell the accusation; hence money
Freely given and spent in the King's service
Before Toulouse, is now set down against me.
The revenues from Eye and Berkhamstead,
From the vacant bishoprics and abbacies
When I was Chancellor, are demanded;
An amount so vast as would involve my see

In beggary to pay the tithe of it.
Thus Henry's hate reveals the fell intent
To ruin me; and thus beneath the ermine
Peeps an enemy. In this predicament
I ask your counsel. For me, the question
Is resolved to this: God's anger or man's?
And as you fear that you will answer me.
Did not the King's son and all the Barons,
When I was consecrate, declare me free
From every bond?

Henry. When you were promoted
To the Church of Canterbury, you were
Discharged from all the bonds and reckonings
In the temporal court. None of the Bishops here
Can fail in just remembrance of the same.

Foliot. I beseech you forget not whence you are,
To whom you are indebted; to consider
The danger in which you've placed the Church
In this most perilous and stormy time.
Is't not the duty of her faithful son
To think of her or e'er he thinks of self?
If that be so then render to the King
The dignities he hath bestowed on you.
The show of humbleness may work excuse

And peradventure free the Church, ourselves
And you from every other penalty.

Beket. I well perceive whither you tend, my lord.

Henry. That counsel heeded, our subversion follows,
And then Holy Church will be dependent
On each king's caprice; worldly policy
Will be a doctrine, submission to the crown
A creed.

Hilary. I must counsel moderation
And advise we yield a little to the King.

Robert. 'Tis clearly manifest the Archbishop's life
Is sought. Therefore of two things, one must be
Chosen; his archbishopric or his life.
Now what profit he can take i' the primacy
His head being off, I do not greatly see.

Bartholomew. This present persecution is not general,
But is personal and particular.
Through one alone the affliction cometh,
By him can all calamity be stayed.
'Tis plainly preferable that he should suffer
Than that the whole Church of England perish.

Roger. If I declare that the pastoral function
And the cure of souls should be relinquished
At kingly will or threatening, then should I

Most surely pronounce my condemnation.
If I advise resistance to the crown,
There be those attending will report it
And I shall presently be thrust from out
The synagogue, and be accounted rebel.
Therefore, as now befits this time and charge,
I neither utter this, nor counsel that.

Beket. I do commiserate the state of those
Who hide their cowardice beneath the cloak
Of sufferance.

Enter King's Messenger.

Messenger. My lords, the King commands
Appearance in his court.

[Exeunt except Beket, Winchester and Salisbury.]

Beket. 'Tis Saint Stephen's day,
The introit prophesies the scene that is
To follow. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.

Nottingham Castle. Great Hall of Council. JOHN of Oxford presiding. FOLIOT, ROBERT, Bishop of Hereford; HILARY, Bishop of Chichester; TRACY, BRITO, FITZ URSE, DE BROU; officers of the Court, etc. Prelates and Lords Temporal seated.

John. There are those present whom the King suspects
Do minister to Becket's aid and comfort;
To such I now address myself. Henceforth
The repetition of such acts will make
The doer traitor, and the headsman more expert.

Enter BEKET in full pontificals and bearing his cross.

Robert. My lord, I pray you suffer me.

(Endeavors to take the cross from Becket.)

Foliot. (approaching Becket) If the King
Shall see you in this guise approach his court
He'll surely draw the sword against the cross.
Unequal match; his arm is stronger far
Than yours.

Beket. Not so, his sword can cut my body
And fell me to the earth; my cross can wound
His soul and smite him down to hell!

Enter the KING hastily.

John. (to the King) Our enemy's in full pontificals.
'T were dangerous to seize him now.

King. (to Becket) Wherefore
Comest thou in such array unto my court?
Such thing hath not been seen before by any
Christian king. 'T is more like a traitor's act
Than subject come to hear his sentence.

Tracy. This
Shame redounds not only against the King,
But against the realm itself.

Fitz Urse. This all comes
From doing honor to a beast!

*(Tumultuous cries throughout the court. John whispers
to the King and beckons to Hilary who approaches.)*

John. Silence!
What need delay? Pronounce, my Lord of Chichester!

Hilary. (addresses Becket) Once wert thou our primate
and we were bound

To thy obedience; but forasmuch as thou
Who, with emphasis didst swear allegiance,
Dost still resist the King, and dost contemn
The ordinances pertaining to his honor
And royal dignity, we here pronounce
Thee perjured; and since 'twere shame in us to yield
Obedience to a perjurer, we now
Do place ourselves beneath the Pope's protection
And cite thee to his presence.

Beket. I hear you.

King. Beket, Beket, how feeble thou art now!

Beket. Henry, I charge you be at peace with God.
I know the phantasies which you have cherished,
And how the flame of hot desire was fanned
By young ambition. Be not deluded,
Glory's a dream, forgotten when we wake.
The very clouds that dark a summer's sky,
And melt in rain upon the thirsty earth,
In simple benefit transcend the bounds
Of human capability.

King. (to the Barons) By the faith
Ye owe me, do me prompt justice on this
My liegeman.

Beket. I'll not submit so tamely!
I claim the arbitrament of the Pope,
To whom, before you all, I do appeal;
And now commit my Church of Canterbury,
My office, and all that's appertaining,
Unto his direction; nor shall you escape
My fellow Bishops, who fear earthly power
More than heavenly justice. I summon you
To the audience of the Pope, and now depart
As from the enemies of the Catholic Church
And apostolic see.

King. The villain hath
Disarmed us!

Tracy. Traitor!

Brito. Thief!

Fitz Urse. Perjurer!

De Broc. Liar!

Beket. Thou art very brave De Broc, I saw thee
But yesternight enter a peasant's cot,
And heard thee utter foulest maledictions
Against an aged woman. Her wolf-hound
Growled, whereat thou saidst: "good dog, nice dog, sweet
dog."

Thy magnanimity that cursed thy kin,
Could compliment a brute, when thou didst fear
'T would bite thee!

AN INTERVAL OF SEVEN YEARS.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Room in the Abbey of St. Columba, Sens.*

Enter BEKET and GRIM.

Grim. Does your purpose hold, my lord, for England?

Beket. Yes, at length my mind's made up, no more will I
Solicit Rome. Full seven years have I tarried
In the hope that Alexander would support
My feeble arm in this most holy work.
Seven years a wretched exile from my church,
A banishment prolonged by papal artifice.
Were they determinately bent on right
In this fierce quarrel, one question would be asked:
"Whose cause is Heaven's?" Swift answer would be given,
Decision reached, and vacillation cease.
But like a pendulum, the Pope vibrates
Between the right and wrong, so nearly touching each,
He doth encourage both. Does that become a man
Whose hands do hold the keys, reward for good,
And punishment for ill? At Rome 'tis now

As erst it was within Jerusalem ;
Integrity's a lonely stranger there.
The wingèd swarms of hates and spites infest
And poison all. Iniquity's enthroned,
Heaven's dearest gift despised, all honor gone,
The cause of justice treated with foul scorn,
While grinning enmity is eager for my life
And every Pharisee doth cry aloud :
"Release Barrabas ! Crucify the Christ !"

Enter FITZ STEPHEN.

Fitz Stephen (to Grim). Shall we inform him on't ?

Grim.

Per-

chance 'twere best.

Fitz Stephen. My lord, King Louis in haste hath hither
sent

Entreaty that you will at least delay
Your purposed journey. The English coast is watched
By armèd men, each one a murderer,
Since nothing but your life will satisfy them.
Our English King on hearing your intent,
Was wild with passion ; threw off his cap, his belt,
Tore both his hair and garments, foamed at the mouth,
And raved as if possessed with evil spirits.

Beket. And that man thinks he hath ability
To rule the universe ; yet he, poor fool !
Cannot control the puny faculties
That make him more than beast !
Thou hast seen a tranquil lake reflecting
Autumn's sunset, and been rapt in wonder
As the beauteous tints have chased each other
O'er the surface, and hast marked how faithful
'Twas to heaven. Such is the mind of man :
When God's peace rests thereon, it straight assumes
The reflex of divinity, and shows
The glory that was latent round about it ;
Reveals the good of which humanity
Is capable, and joys our better part
With noble prophecies of nobler times :
But when 't is ruffled by a storm of passion,
The imagery's confused, reflection's power
Lost ; and human speech becomes as senseless
As the wild waves' frothy turbulence.

——— They threaten me you say ?

Fitz S. With death if you dare venture on this errand.

Beket. Shall that delay me ? No ! Threats are for those
who fear ;

Courage is the soul of all endeavor ;
The cause is dead that hath it not.

Fitz S. Why should
A kingdom arm itself against one man ?

Beket. That's the expression of their admiration ;
To be hated by the evil is a compliment.

Grim. I marvel men are so alert for wrong ;
Such very snails when good is to be done.

Beket. An evil spirit dwells in royal courts,
And doth reverse the maxims of morality,
Making it honorable to cringe, to smirk,
To lie, to fawn and flatter. The stuff is poor
Of which our new regality is made,
As poor as are the services it renders,
'Tis the arch patron of obsequiousness.
As this world goes, the greatest monarch 's he
Who best displays ability to bribe :
Association is education
Thus our noblemen are most ignoble.

Fitz S. Surely to be well born must count for something ?

Beket. For everything, if by't you mean great souled ;
That 's not your thought ; 't would overturn the state,
The first would be the last, the last the first.

A peasant's child whose only heritage
Is mental purity, is nobler born
Than he who was begotten in a palace,
And in whose veins doth course the tainted blood
Of Kings!⁽¹⁾

(Cries heard without.)

Am I called? What mean those voices?

Grim. Ill news doth travel quickly, thus your mind
Had scarce conceived the plan of your departure
When our fellow exiles resident in Sens
Despondent gathered at the abbey gate.
There are they now, the men with sorrow dumb,
The women all distraught. Grief is not grief
When shared with those for whom we grieve; but once
Divorce the sufferers, what was simple sorrow
Becomes calamity.

Beket. I feared their summons.
Thou hast touched the craven part of me.
When enmity in vain provoketh cowardice
Love oft can do't. This obligation's clear,
Yet gladly would I shirk the parting.

[Exeunt Beket, Fitz Stephen and Grim.]

SCENE II.

Before the Abbey of St. Columba. Exiles discovered kneeling around BEKET.

Beket. Farewell! Farewell! The word's unpalatable,
And hath a taste of death about it
That chokes the voice with variable utterance,
And fills the eyes with tears. Use makes its use
More difficult; 'tis the first word our infant tongues
Lisp seriously, the last we whisper with regret.
Joy's fitful flashes scarce illumine youth
When sorrow comes, and like a constant cloud
Obscures our sun till gloomy shadows deepen
Into night. Our birth is the beginning
Of our death; our life a long farewell.

First Exile. Home, country, friends were all for thee
forsaken
And thou dost leave us to despair.

Beket. Weep not,
Omnipotence with tend'rest eye beholds
The weakest struggler.

Second Exile. Would we could think so.

Beket. Faithful so long, be not distrustful now.
God's pity compasseth this little world;
It is emblemed in the snowy mantle
That he flings about it, which rests as chaste
Above impurity as when it clothes
The couch of sleeping violets.

(Scene closes with the Archbishop's benediction.)

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Room in the castle of the Duke of Normandy at Falaise. The KING, FITZ URSE, TRACY, MORVILLE, BRITO, Courtiers, etc.*

Enter Sir RICHARD LUCY, breathless.

King. Speak man! I fear unwelcome news when breath
Fails the messenger.

Lucy. Your royal son in haste
Despatched me hither. The rude elements,
More loyal than your subjects, with glad assistance
Hastened me. Scarce had my foot made imprint
On your Norman coast, when the ready steed
Champed at the bit and neighed impatiently,
All eagerness to bear me to this presence
That here maturer wisdom might furnish
Counsel fit to smooth the ruffled front
Of this distracted time.

(Hands the King a letter.)

King. My foe in England !
I can scarce believe it.

Lucy. Close at hand are they .
Whom I, more fleetly mounted, did o'ertake.
Even now they enter ; my lord of York
Will doubtless give emphatic confirmation.

Enter Archbishop of York.

Archbishop of York. The realm is all o'errun with
violence ;
The kingdom in a flame. Rebellious Becket
Hath excommunicated us, and all
Concerned in the young King's coronation.

Enter GILBERT FOLIOT, Bishop of London ; HUGO, of Durham ; JOCELYN, of Salisbury ; and WALTER, of Rochester.

King. More bearers of evil tidings.

Foliot. Sire ! Sire !
From you we ask protection ; the Primate
Hath denounced us all. The lightnings of the Church,
Though dealt by that unworthy hand, have blasted
All our power for usefulness in England ;
And proud authority hath nerveless fallen
Before the blatancy of tumult.

Enter DE BROC.

De Broc. That villain priest hath now confounded all;
With huge bodies of horse and foot he marches
Through the realm, and with successful eloquence
Doth urge the timid English to revolt.

King. Oh! I am bravely served. So many tongues
To tell me of my wrongs, and not an arm
To right them! This man who came to my court
On a lame horse, doth lift his foot to kick me,
And not one of all the lazy varlets
Whom I nourish dares resent the insult.
Go! Get thee gone and worship him! I am
No longer king!

SCENE II.

Room in the archiepiscopal residence adjoining Canterbury Cathedral. BEKET, GRIM and Monks seated; some reading and some transcribing manuscripts.

(A monk yawns.)

Beket. (to the monk) What, art thou wearied with over-study?

Monk. No, but I have finishèd the volume.

Beket. How hast thou finished it?

Monk. I must entreat
Your pardon; I do not understand you.

Beket. Then thou dost not understand what thou hast said.

To read with profit, the book should merely
Be an index, and the mind should be the book.

(Noise heard as of loud knocking on the door without.)

Who are those brawlers? Admit them!

Enter FITZ URSE, TRACY, MORVILLE and BRITO.

What want ye?

Fitz Urse. We bear an order from the King, and since
It appertains to you alone, we freely
Bid you choose if these shall be our auditors.

Beket. There's no need of privacy, they shall stay
And hear you ; for truly these are worthy men ;
Modesty itself might speak before them.

Fitz Urse. We bring this mandate from our King, with
power
To compel obedience to 't, and here, and now,
Demand that you pronounce the absolution
Of the Bishops.

Beket. With power to compel !
Is your king omnipotent that he deals out
Compulsion thus ? He is deceived. Bid him
Compel the wingèd foresters to sing ;
That, if experience hath power to teach him aught,
Will prick the bladder of desertless pride
And I shall be submission.

Fitz Urse. Wilt thou absolve
The Archbishop ?

Beket. Our sovereign lord the Pope
Hath excommunicated him ; it were
Presumption should I interfere in that.

Fitz Urse. Thou art a quibbling traitor, deserving
Of a traitor's death.

Beket. I am no traitor.

Tracy. From whom hast thou thy power?

Beket. The spirit-
ual rights

From Heaven and the Pope, the temporal from
The King.

Morville. Will you resign the temporal rights?

Beket. I will not.

Fitz Urse. Then art thou doubly traitor ;
For thou thyself hast said that he who's false
To Heaven loseth Heaven ; and he that's traitor
To the King, doth forfeit kingly gifts.

Beket. He that is true to Heaven cannot be false
To man ! On that I found my claim to rights
Both spiritual and temporal. Son Reginald,
Since my late coming over here I have
Sustained many injuries in person
And in goods ; notwithstanding that the King
Did promise I should live in safety and in peace.
And even thou, who should be the last to vex me,
Dost pester me with menaces.

Fitz Urse. If you
Are wronged, the course of law is open, why do
Not you complain?

Beket. To whom may I complain?

Fitz Urse. To whom? To the young King.

Beket. Shall the
eagle's prey

Crave pity from the eaglet? That way is stopped,
I am forbid to make appeal to him;
How then from him can I expect redress?
All benefit of justice and of reason
Is denied me; but such right and such law
As an archbishop can have; that will I exercise,
And will be let by no man.

Fitz Urse. He defies us!
He shall repent of this. In the King's name
We command you, suffer him not to 'scape us.

[*Exeunt Fitz Urse, Tracy, Morville and Brito.*]

Beket. Fear it not, when ye come, ye shall find me.
'Tis the vesper bell, let us to the church.

Grim. Not now, when murderers arm for your destruction.
Come! while yet there's time. Fly! by the secret passage

To the cloisters, or by the narrow stairway
To the roof.

Beket. Were I to shrink as if galled
From the burden, 'twould prove my life has had
But little purpose in't. Our past should be
A prelude to the harmonies of duty.
Come! 'tis the hour of prayer.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Nave and choir of Canterbury Cathedral. BEKET, GRIM, Monks, Choristers, etc. walk slowly in procession to the altar. The organ pealing and Choristers chanting.

Noise heard of the Knights endeavoring to force open the cathedral gates, upon which some Monks hasten to secure them.

Beket. Unbar the doors! This is a temple, not
A fortress!

The gates opened. Enter FITZ URSE, TRACY, BRITO and MORVILLE in armor with shields⁽¹⁾ and drawn swords.

Fitz Urse. Where is the wicked traitor?

Morville. Where is the Archbishop?

(BEKET standing on the first step of the altar turns and confronts his murderers.)

Beket.

Here! Here!

Fitz Urse.

Once

more

Wilt thou absolve the Bishops?

Beket.

When they repent,

But not before.

Fitz Urse. Then thy life shall answer it.

[*Exeunt terrified Monks and Choristers.*]

Beket. Thou art welcome to the good that it will do thee.
Insensate ye who fight against the Church ;
She stands invincible, and like a mighty cliff
That rears its giant form above the roaring tide,
Hurls the wild breakers back into the deep
Mocking eternity !

Morville. Again, wilt thou
Absolve the Bishops ?

Beket. No !

Fitz Urse. Then die ! and thus

(*Knights attack Beket, who falls.*)

May perish all such traitors ! [*Exeunt Knights.*]

Grim. (*kneeling by the side of Beket and supporting him.*)

My master still !

Beket. O faithful Grim ! A joy unspeakable
Possesseth me.

Grim. 'T is death.

Beket. And death is victory ! ⁽²⁾

[*Dies.*]

NOTES.

NOTES.

ACT I.

NOTE 1, PAGE 5. Thierry, (Norman Conquest, i. 233 and note.) says :
"According to an old rhyme, the first lord of Conigsby, named William, came from Brittany, with his wife Tiffany, his servant Maufas, and his dog Hardigras." (Hearne, præf, ad Joh. de Fordun. Scoti-chronicon, p. 170.

NOTE 2, PAGE 6. In England, at this time, no more solemn oath could be taken than one sworn "by the abbey of Glastonbury." See Oaths ; their Origin, Nature, and History. James Endell Tyler, B. D., p. 154.

NOTE 3, PAGE 10. William II., (Rufus) was killed by Walter Tyrell, while hunting in the New Forest, Aug. 2, 1100.

NOTE 4. PAGE 17. Eleanor, Queen of Henry II., was divorced from Louis VII. of France.

NOTE 5, PAGE 18. This troubadour was Bernard de Ventadour.

"Cette princesse (Elénore) trop connue par ses galantries accueille le troubadour avec une bonté pleine d'estime et de considération. Il osa bientôt soupirer pour elle. Quoique le langage de l'amour ne fût souvent qu'un jeu d'imagination ou d'esprit, il paroît vraiment sérieux dans les chansons où Bernard célèbre Elénore."

"J'aimerois mieux, mourir du tourment que j'endure, que de soulager mon cœur par un aveu téméraire. Elle m'a permis, il est vrai, de lui faire telle demande que je voudrai. Mais j'aurois à lui faire une demande de si haut

prix, qu'un roi ne devoit point la risquer. Cependant elle approuve que je lui ecrive, et elle fait lire."—Histoire Littéraire des Troubadours, Paris, 1774, Tome I., 30, 31.

This Troubadour must not be confounded with Bertrand de Born, whom Dante (for his crimes in connection with the family of Henry II.) has placed in the Inferno, where carrying by the hand his severed head like a lamp he runs about, while *it* proclaims his crimes and laments his fate. Inferno, XVIII., 118-139.

NOTE 6, PAGE 19. "Paterins, hérétiques qui s'éleverent dans le XII. siècle, et qui furent condamnées en 1179, dans le concile général de Latran, sous Alexander III."

"On tire leur nom du mot latin *patis*, qui veut dire *souffrir*, parcequ'ils affectoient de souffrir tout avec patience et se vantoient encore d'être envoyés dans le monde pour consoler les affligés."—Moreri, VIII., 117.

"Les malédictions dont se chargeaient réciproquement les deux papes et les deux clergés, les anecdotes scandaleuses qu'ils révélaient imprudemment les uns sur les autres, et qui rendaient tous les prêtres également odieux, contribuaient aux progrès des sectaires, Ceux-ci, sous les noms divers d'apostoliques, de publicains, de patérins, tendaient tous également à la réforme de l'Eglise. On ne peut guère signaler leurs progrès qu'aux bûchers allumés pour les détruire ; c'est par leur supplice seulement qu'on apprend leur existence simultanée dans toutes les provinces de la Gaule, de l'Espagne, de l'Italie et de la Germanie ; de même les punitions qui leur furent infligées cette année par le concile d'Oxford nous annoncent leur passage de Goscogne en Angleterre.

Les prélats anglais ordonnèrent que les novateurs, après avoir été battus de verges, fussent marqués au front avec un fer rouge ; en même temps ils

interdirent à tous les chrétiens de les recevoir dans leurs maisons, ou de leur fournir aucun aliment, aucun remède, aucun habit. Les prêtres réussirent à rendre ce supplice plus cruel encore que le bûcher. Les novateurs, abandonnés sur les grand chemins, au milieu des plus grand froids de l'hiver, avec leurs épaules sanglantes et leurs fronts cautérisés, y périrent presque tous de faim, de froid et de misère, répétant jusqu'à la fin des passages de l' Ecriture, dans lesquels sont bénis ceux qui encourrent la haine des hommes, ou qui s'exposent aux persécution pour l'amour de Dieu."—Sismondi, Histoire des Français, IV., 12, 13.

Also, see Hume, Hist. England, I., 422.

NOTE 7, PAGE 21. "Engleran de Trie, a valiant French knight, who, in full armor, rode furiously against Becket, his lance in the rest; the priest unhorsed the knight and made a prize of his charger."—Campbell's Lord Chancellors, I., 73.

NOTE 8, PAGE 23. "Salisbury (Jean Petit, plus connu sous le nom de) le plus savant homme de son siècle." "Pendant ses loisirs, Jean avait terminé un ouvrage plus connu que celui que nous venons de citer; c'est le *Polycraticus*, production tres-remarquable pour le temps, sous le double rapport de l'érudition et du style. Il adressa ce Traité à Thomas Becket, chancelier d'Angleterre."—Biographie Universelle, XL., 170, 171.

"*Polycraticus*" treats of wealth and worldly honors, the evils which accompany prosperity, the duties of life and the vanities that take their place. It denounces flatterers and parasites, pride and avarice. It condemns the vices of every class of Society; regrets the errors of humanity, and eulogizes virtue as absolutely essential to the happiness of men.

NOTE 9, PAGE 24. John of Salisbury studied under the famous Abelard. Biographie Universelle, XL., 171; Hist. France, Michelet, I., 246, note.

NOTE 10, PAGE 26. "Now, when Agrippa had reigned three years all over Judea, he came to the city Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower ; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Cæsar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety. At which festival, a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning ; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him ; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good,) that 'he was a god' ; and they added, 'Be thou merciful to us ; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.' Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him ; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends and said, 'I, whom ye call a *god*, am commanded presently to depart this life ; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me ; and I, who was by you called *immortal*, am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept what Providence allots, as it pleases God ; for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner.' Accordingly he departed this life being in the fifty fourth year of his age, and in the seventh year of his reign."—Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, III., Book XIX., Chap. 8.

NOTE 11, PAGE 26. I. e. the index finger. "The Roman *sortes* were transferred, in the Middle Ages, to the Scriptures, under the name of *Sortes Sanctorum*."—Fosbrokes Antiquities, I., 327.

NOTE 12, PAGE 30. At this time it was not uncommon for the barons, and even the king to extract the teeth of a Jew in the endeavor to extort money from him. "King John once demanded 10,000 marks from a Jew of Bristol; and on his refusal, ordered one of his teeth to be drawn every day till he should comply. The Jew lost seven teeth; and then paid the sum required of him."—Hume, Hist. Eng., II., 226.

NOTE 13, PAGE 30. Appolonia was applied to for curing the toothache. Fosbrooke's Antiquities, I., 99.

ACT II.

NOTE 1, PAGE 36. "Royalty is crime." This expression was frequently heard during the times immediately subsequent to the Norman Conquest.

Henry of Huntingdon, Anglia Sacra, p. 699; Thierry's Norman Conquest, I., 360.

NOTE 2, PAGE 47. I must refer the reader to the note (Q) in Hume's Hist. Eng., Vol. I., 482, ed. London, 1796.

NOTE 3, PAGE 49. "They make assassination seem a virtue." John of Salisbury himself contends in his Polycraticus (Leyden, 1639, p. 206.) that "it is praiseworthy and just to flatter a tyrant, to throw him off his guard and kill him." Becket's unexpected and decided stand occasioned John considerable uneasiness; he was always afraid that his property would be confiscated, and counseled Becket to timid measures. Michelet, Hist. France, I., 241, note.

ACT III.

NOTE 3, PAGE 63. The king publicly exhibited the Pope's letters in which the latter consented to Henry's request and promised to appoint Roger, (erroneously printed Richard throughout these pages) Archbishop of York, apostolical legate, and to suspend Becket from all authority as Archbishop. Thierry, II., 89.

ACT IV.

NOTE 1, PAGE 81. Becket in one of his letters (the Rescript, or answer to all his suffragans) makes use of these words :—

“Ye say moreover, that I was exalted and promoted from a base and low degree to this dignity by him. [Henry II.] I grant that I came of no royal or kingly blood ; yet notwithstanding I had rather be in the number of them whom virtue of mind than of birth maketh noble.”

ACT V.

NOTE 1, PAGE 93. The knights in ancient representations of this murder are distinguished by their shields : Fitz Urse, three bears passant ; Brito, three bears heads muzzled ; Tracy, two bars gules ; Morville, fretty fleur-de-lis.

NOTE 2, PAGE 94. It was also “victory” in another sense ; victory in consequence of which Henry submitted to be flogged at the altar of Canterbury. He laid at the Pope's feet his recent conquest of Ireland, imposed the tax of Peter's penny upon each house in that country, renounced the Constitutions of Clarendon, covenanted to pay towards the Crusade, to serve himself if the Pope required it, and declared England a fief of the Holy See. Michelet, Hist. France, I., 248.

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